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*Men's Fashion
Extravaganza*



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AN ARTIST OF THE WORLD

Acknowledged as a genius of fantasy, Armenian-born artist Martiros's subjects range from portraits and devotional pictures to more abstract motifs. So what inspires the man who says that what he really paints is "feeling"?



MUCH OF CONTEMPORARY art is thought-provoking and makes, or tries to make, bold statements about the world. But is it beautiful enough that true connoisseurs would want to hang one of the paintings in their homes?

For Martiros Manoukian – known throughout the art world simply as Martiros – beauty is everything. “My motive is beauty,” he says. Judging from his sales figures – more than 4,000 canvases globally bear his signature – his expression of this laudable motive hasn’t gone unnoticed.

Owners of Martiros’ work are found from the Americas to Asia, and the artist considers himself a global citizen. “A real artist belongs to the world; his book is his passport,” he claims.

This cosmopolitan attitude does not mean that Martiros has lost touch with his roots. On the contrary: his ethnic and cultural background is important to him. Born at the cradle of Mount Ararat – close to the location of the world’s oldest Christian cathedral – he remains proud of his ethnic and spiritual origins. “Being raised in an Armenian family, I have inherited the greatest and the most important human qualities, which are honesty, fair-mindedness and the ability to value beauty and life,” he explains. The artist believes that this heritage is something he should enhance and represent, which he does through his work,

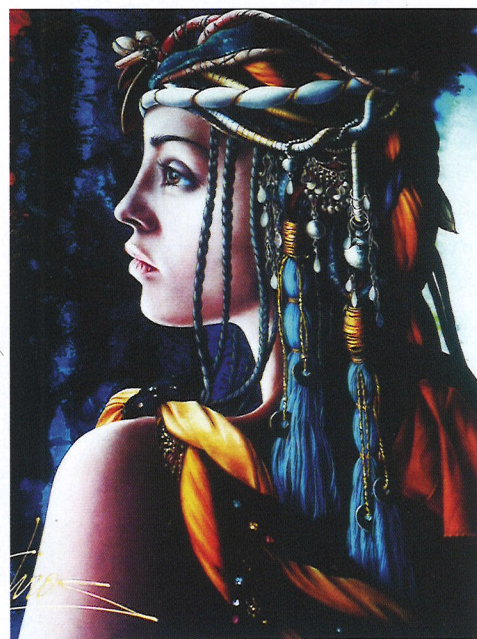
arguing: “A nation recognises an individual, but a nation is recognised by its individuals.”

This commitment to his roots, however, does not render Martiros’ art stagnant, which is perhaps expected given that he held his first exhibition at the tender age of 11. He relates the variation in his style to the way in which talent changes over the years: “The style itself is dictated by time. You’re born with talent and that ability is demonstrated over time.”

Despite the widespread popularity of his work, Martiros does not believe in tailoring his painting to market demands. “An artistic person shouldn’t have limits, as creating is given from above and without limits,” he says. The rejection of boundaries is reflected in how Martiros sees himself as a person. “Today, I’m not the same as I was yesterday, and probably not as I will be tomorrow,” he says. However, he’s not insensitive toward the people who buy his work, characterising the feeling of walking around a gallery of his paintings as “indefinable.”

“There’s a feeling of a responsibility towards what you are doing, as here are people that value your creation. You realise that you are not a simple human being.”

Martiros hopes his audience in Hong Kong will be a source of inspiration for his art. “I want them to know what I don’t yet know about myself,” he says.



www.martirosart.com